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17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS) A pilot project in southcentral Texas conducted by the Bishops' Committee for the Spanish-speaking (BCSS) is aimed at improving the economic condition of the migrant. Objectives are to provide counsel for the migrant before he begins his annual migration, to help workers leaving the migrant stream to make orderly transition to industrial employment, to develop opportunities for various training programs, to establish a good working climate between the BCSS office and the migrants, and to assist with individual problems. Sociology students at a local university assisted in interviewing migrants, and in compiling and analyzing the data from the thousands of migrants.

Ways in which individuals and organizations can participate are listed: individuals and employers can advise employees and personnel of the service; churches can help migratory workers in their communities; schools can give guidance and vocational training; colleges and universities can offer to sociology students courses pertaining to migrants; civic organizations can inform their members about the problems of migrants and about the BCSS; newspapers, radio and TV can inform the public; and communities can develop action that would be beneficial to all concerned.

Photographs of the project, an employment referral service manual, recommendations for job candidates, and a summary of an employment opportunities questionnaire are included.

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ERIC Form 1

Migrants - Bishops' Committee For Spanish-Speaking

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Pilot Project

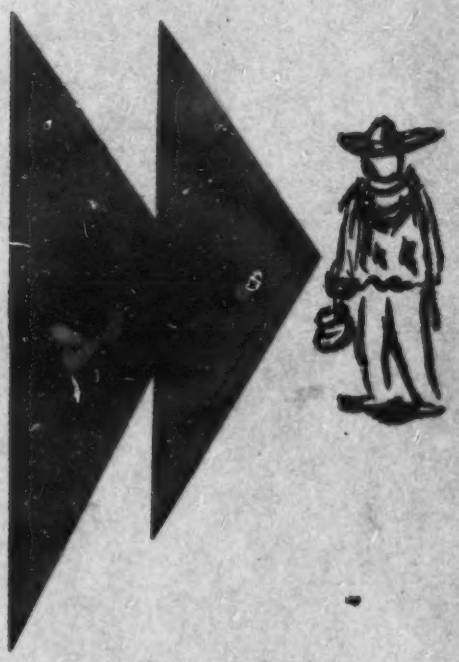
MERRILL TRUST FUND

to improve the employment opportunities

OF THE MIGRANT FARM WORKERS OF MEXICAN ORIGIN

ED002680

JAN 3 1962



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BISHOPS' COMMITTEE FOR THE SPANISH SPEAKING
828 FREDERICKSBURG ROAD SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

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FOREWORD

Throughout the centuries mankind has developed tools intended solely for the benefit of humanity. This is especially true in the recently developed Merrill Trust Grant's Pilot Project, "Employment Opportunities For Migrants Of Mexican Origin," currently in operation under the auspices of the Bishops' Committee for the Spanish Speaking. The BCSS has been helping the migrant farm worker since its organization in 1945.

The plight of tens of thousands of migrant farm workers in the Spanish-speaking Southwest is a problem that demands urgent attention and practical and effective solution in the decade of the 1960's.

Migrant farm workers have been condemned to the status of forgotten citizens by the apathetic attitudes of civilian and governmental authority. Their lot has been deplorable exploitation resulting in poverty, disease and juvenile delinquency. The conditions under which the migrant farm workers live have literally robbed citizens of Mexican origin of human dignity. They have been excluded from most of the social planning of the past twenty years.

Mechanization is lessening the need for migrants and making their migration less and less profitable. Imminent action and planning are needed to develop ways and means of stabilizing migrants by preparing them for permanent employment in areas outside the migrant stream.

It is sincerely believed that the Employment Opportunities Project is an important undertaking to alleviate the plight of the migrant farm workers. This is unquestionably one of the most significant developments and one of the soundest approaches in the socio-economic planning for migratory workers in many years. It is a practical and well-organized plan.

The favorable response to this project by the migrant farm workers, directors of governmental and public agencies, community leaders and the community as a whole speaks highly for the Merrill plan to improve the economic conditions of the unfortunate American citizens of Mexican origin presently in the migrant stream.

Everything that has been accomplished has been in full accord with the expressed wishes of the Charles E. Merrill Trust Foundation as outlined in the grant. With the continued support of the many zealous and dedicated citizens who are interested and concerned with the problems of the migrant farm workers and their children, this program will continue to develop to greater heights and will become an asset to the community and nation.

Therefore, the Bishops' Committee for the Spanish Speaking respectfully submits this project for the consideration of all who have at heart the betterment of migrant farm families.

Rev. John A. Wagner
Executive Secretary

THE PROBLEM AND THE FACTS

In 1960 there were 105,000 migrant workers in the State of Texas, a figure determined by the Texas Council on Migrant Labor. Sixty-five thousand of these worked interstate in over thirty states; forty thousand migrated in Texas. The situation reaches its climax in Texas, but the Spanish-speaking migrants find conditions deplorable at their home-bases in Arizona, New Mexico and California. Many live in sub-standard housing during the off-season.

Migrant farm workers are employed from three to eight months of the year; their average annual wage is approximately $900. They travel in dilapidated trucks overflowing with family and belongings. On the job site they very often live in shacks, in canvas tents and occasionally in unpainted and sagging barrack-type camps.

Migrants are excluded from practically all state and federal social welfare legislation. They are not entitled to workmen's compensation benefits or unemployment insurance. In most states they are excluded from the protection of the maximum hours and minimum wage laws and are legally or practically forbidden to organize for collective bargaining.

The plight of the migrant worker is still more disastrous when considering his children who usually work the same hours as the parents and often constitute a lamentable problem of illegal child labor. Migration from crop to crop interferes with their education. The money earned by the children is generally recognized as essential to augment the family income.

The practical solution of the problems of tens of thousands of forgotten Americans of Spanish-speaking origin must be of concern to legislators -locally, state-wide and national. It is the concern of all who believe in justice and

human dignity. It is the responsibility of directors of public and private agencies, of church groups, church leaders and of the community as a whole. The problem has reached such a stage that is a national disgrace; consequently, immediate and positive action is demanded toward its solution.

Are Americans who are more fortunately placed by Providence in a supposedly progressive society going to perpetuate, by their apathetic attitude, the condemnation of tens of thousands of men, women and children to poverty, disease, juvenile delinquency and degradation of human dignity? How long is progressive America going to permit these shameful conditions to disgrace her in the eyes of the world?

Americans prate of neighborliness toward the Spanish-speaking countries to the South, but in the migrant farm workers they are insensitive to the treatment of the exploited Spanish-speaking citizens in their own Southwest.

PILOT PROJECT AREA DATA

The San Antonio area located in Bexar County in South Central Texas combines the best features for the BCSS Employment Opportunities Project. It was selected as a worthy location for the Pilot Project because this is an area of Texas that some 20,000 migrant farm workers call their home-base, and is the principal starting point of the annual migration of the Spanish Speaking.

The surrounding counties for a 100-mile radius are predominantly Spanish Speaking (approximately 53%), as reflected by the following data:

County	Total Population	% Latin-American Population	Estimated Latin American Population
Atascosa	20,200	62%	12,600
Bee	20,200	45%	9,100
Bexar	615,900	53%	326,500
Comal	20,100	41%	8,300
Frio	11,200	70%	7,900
Goliad	4,200	62%	2,600
Gonzalez	17,700	29%	5,200
Guadalupe	26,000	47%	12,300
Karnes	14,000	56%	7,900
Kendall	6,100	21%	1,300
LaSalle	7,400	88%	6,500
Live Oak	8,000	44%	3,600
Medina	17,300	56%	9,700
Uvalde	17,300	46%	8,000
Wilson	12,400	44%	5,500
Zavala	10,900	83%	9,100
TOTAL:	828,900	53%	436,100

PILOT PROJECT
BISHOPS' COMMITTEE FOR THE SPANISH SPEAKING
TO IMPROVE
THE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES OF THE
MIGRANT FARM WORKERS OF MEXICAN ORIGIN

The Bishops' Committee for the Spanish Speaking, in liaison with the Bishops' Committee for Migrant Workers and the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, is currently engaged in a closely coordinated endeavor aimed at improving the economic condition of the American citizen migrant farm worker. The pilot project, under the direction of Luis Alvarado in the San Antonio area, is financed by the Charles E. Merrill Trust, a philanthropic Foundation of Boston, Massachusetts.

The Bishops' Committee for the Spanish Speaking, in administering its responsibility of the Merrill Trust grant, has as a general objective the improvement of employment opportunities for the migrant farm worker. This objective is to be attained as follows:

1. The grant enables the BCSS to provide counsel to the migrant worker before he begins his annual trek from his winter-based home to the crop locality. He is advised of the localities where the best opportunities exist for making his migration the least uncomfortable and the most profitable. The migrant is also informed of the advantages of choosing preferred job areas and of the routes where successive job opportunities exist. He is briefed on what to do in case of an emergency and the least expensive way to return to his home-base. In this way more migrant workers will avail themselves of state and national assistance and a more substantial number of them will be assured of jobs on arrival at all points of their migratory itinerary.

2. The second objective is to help workers who are leaving the migrant

stream to make an orderly transition to industrial or more constant and profitable employment. By attaining employment in more rewarding areas, the migrant worker and his family will be stabilized in the community. Factory, construction and maintenance jobs often require little training for the male worker; his wife can easily qualify for domestic positions and garment factory employment.

To achieve a stable family home and year-round employment, the migrant farm worker often demands training to make him "employable." The BCSS can develop opportunities for various training programs. Programs that lend themselves to the need that exists would include various forms of woodcraft, conversational English, basic homemaking, understanding of the responsibilities of citizenship, drafting, photography, upholstering, etc. Training opportunities of this kind can be made available by arrangement with Community Services at St. Mary's University, vocational schools, local community centers, labor unions, etc.

In order to give continuity to the program, the BCSS organized a Social Action Council in the pilot area, obtained the assistance of Sociology students at St. Mary's University and established an Employment Referral Service. A brief description of each program follows:

ST. AUGUSTA'S SOCIAL ACTION COUNCIL

St. Augusta's Social Action Council was organized to work in liaison with the BCSS office in connection with the Merrill Trust Fund Employment Opportunities Pilot Project. It was formed primarily to create an up-to-date background of knowledge and understanding of the migrant farm worker's problems through a close, personal approach on the neighborhood level.

The Council consists of the following members:

Father Joseph Gysbers, Pastor
Father Theo Clerx, Assistant Pastor
Mr. Sylvester Ortega, Chairman
Mr. Miguel Alfaro
Mr. Frank Bergara
Miss Janie Cervantes
Mr. Antonio Martinez
Mrs. Sylvester Ortega
Mr. Miguel Alfaro

The members of the Council occupy a key role in the program because their interpretation of specific neighborhood social patterns is invaluable. The functions of the Council include the following:

1. To establish a good working "climate" between the BCSS office and the migrant workers.
2. To keep the BCSS posted on unemployment within the pilot project area.
3. To assist in contacting those persons who cannot be reached by telephone.
4. To assist in discerning the workers' individual problems which arise daily in the Employment Referral Service.
5. To assist in registering the migrant farm workers for both seasonal and industrial employment.

ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY SOCIOLOGY STUDENTS

St. Mary's University Sociology Department participants in the Bishops' Committee for the Spanish Speaking Employment Opportunities Project are: Brother Herbert Leies, Head of the Sociology Department, Mr. Joe Garza, Mr. Jesse Paez and Mr. L. de Hoyos, Jr. The Spanish-speaking Sociology students are an integral part of the "team" much needed to further employment opportunities of the migrant farm worker.

The students' assistance was solicited to help in interviewing, compiling

data and analyzing the migrant farm worker's present socio-economic status. Specifically, the students' role is the following:

1. To assist in obtaining information regarding the worker's previous employment experience by means of interviews.
2. To assist in assembling or compiling the information from the Employment Opportunities Questionnaires.
3. To help interpret the information as reflected by the Questionnaires in order to gauge properly the present socio-economic conditions of the migrant workers.

MANUAL OF THE BCSS EMPLOYMENT REFERRAL SERVICE

The following is a list of the principal functions of the BCSS Employment Referral Service:

1. Offer definite job opportunities.
2. Continuously pulse the employment market and the manpower source.
3. Counsel and brief the applicant for employment on factors that will make the interviews with potential employers more successful. This will put the worker in a more favorable competitive position for employment.
4. Intercede with employers in arranging appointments and securing special consideration for applicants when the facts warrant it.
5. Explain the operations of the Merrill Employment Pilot Project to those who are interested in the problems of the migrant worker.
6. Recommend training for applicants for employment where needed.
7. Maintain good relations with employers and prospective employees.
8. Carefully evaluate the applicant's file to ascertain whether or not

he is genuinely interested in the position before referral is made.

9. Keep in close contact with employers and make personal contacts when feasible.

10. Maintain a liaison with the Texas Employment Commission and all employer groups such as city, county, state, home-builders and manufacturers, through their personnel directors.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR JOB CANDIDATES

To obtain the best consideration from the BCSS Employment Referral Service the prospective employee should follow the following rules:

1. He must comply with the BCSS office policy and procedures regarding interviewing hours and appointments. Instructions on referrals must be followed and all forms completed accurately.

2. He must be prepared to answer three important questions: (a) What kind of a job is he looking for? (b) What are his specific qualifications or experience for the job? (c) What is the minimum salary he will consider?

3. He must supply whatever helpful material he can in the manner required by the BCSS office.

4. Appointments:

When the BCSS Employment Referral Office considers the applicant suitable for a particular job vacancy, arrangements are made for him to meet the prospective employer who requests his services. The applicant should not agree to an interview appointment which he does not intend to keep. If he should change his mind or get another job before the time of the scheduled interview, he should contact the BCSS office

immediately, and the employer also if possible, to cancel the appointment. Failure to do so will result in his being considered unreliable by both the BCSS office and the employer and will prevent his receiving any consideration from either in future job openings. In order to get the best jobs the applicant must create good will and take advantage of all the assistance he can get.

Experience shows that some applicants accept any and every interview that is offered them, not because they seriously intend to try to get the job, or even accept it if it is offered, but because they are afraid to antagonize the interviewer by saying "no". The job may be undesirable because of low pay, the work may be out of applicant's line or he may have some other sound reason. If the applicant is sincere and honest, the interviewer will understand and will not hold it against him if he refuses an offer of employment for a valid reason.

When reporting to a potential employer for an interview the applicant must be in the right frame of mind. His chances of obtaining the position in question depend directly on the impression he makes when he meets the potential employer. Great care should be taken to be properly dressed when reporting for an interview.

5. <u>Reporting back on the interviews the BCSS office has arranged for applicant:</u>

It is very important that the applicant report back on each interview the BCSS office has arranged for him. He may do this by telephone or in person. This is a very important phase in obtaining the job he desires and has a direct bearing on the permanency of his employment. His failure to report makes it necessary for the BCSS office to check up

on whether or not he has kept the appointment. This often means calling a very busy employer unnecessarily. The fact that it was necessary to make the inquiry often raises a doubt about the applicant in the employer's mind.

An applicant for employment who is not conscientious about reporting to the office that refers him for employment often is the person who is not dependable with his employer.

There is another good reason for reporting promptly. If the applicant has made a favorable impression and it seems probable that he will get the job, this office will prefer to send other qualified applicants to other positions where they will not compete with him. (The employer usually requests three applicants and selects one).

The BCSS office has confidence in applicants who show reliability, good judgment and a business-like approach.

6. Maintaining Contact with BCSS Office:

The BCSS office encourages applicant to keep in contact and let it know of his availability for employment. The applicant who fails to do this takes the risk of having his application placed in the inactive file. As long as he maintains contact with the BCSS office he will remain under active consideration.

For the convenience of all persons interested in being considered for employment referral service the BCSS has established a sub-office situated at the St. Augusta Clinic. Registrations are taken Saturday morning from 8:00 A.M. to 10:00 A.M.

7. Appearance:

Applicant must make every effort to make a good impression with the

employer or person interviewing him for possible employment. Good grooming is very essential. However, the applicant should be careful not to overdress.

8. Promptness:

The applicant should be on time for interviews. Being punctual indicates to the prospective employer that the applicant will be punctual when on the job.

9. Self-Confidence:

The applicant should meet the prospective employer with confidence and poise. He should act natural and be friendly.

10. Conversation with prospective employer:

Applicant should be brief and to the point. He must be reasonably sure that he meets the qualifications before he ever decides to apply for the job. He must be ready to furnish information about past experience. He should state specifically the minimum salary he would accept if offered the position.

11. References:

Applicant should always have one or two letters of recommendation from previous employers. A letter from his parish priest or minister always helps. He should be ready to list three former employers, giving their names, addresses, telephone numbers and title; also, three character references of people who have known him for at least five years.

12. Tenacity in looking for a job: It takes work to find work.

13. Facts about all employers:

a. Most employers are very understanding. They readily recognize the qualifications of the prospective employee and in most cases hire strictly on his ability to do the job.

b. All employers expect a direct contact in interviewing an applicant for a job.

c. Some employers, during an interview, will test applicant's composure and mental stability by asking questions deliberately designed to make him angry. He is merely testing applicant's reactions to see if he will lose self-control under pressure.

d. Some employers look stern. The applicant should not be alarmed by first impressions.

e. If applicant left his last job with bad feelings, he should not denounce his last employer but should state his reasons for leaving calmly, briefly and truthfully. The new employer usually will evaluate both sides of the matter.

14. Do's and Don'ts during interviews

a. Do remain standing when you introduce yourself to the employer until he tells you to be seated.

b. Don't boast, but if you are confident you can handle the job, say so. Quiet confidence in yourself is fine but be sure the employer knows you have it.

c. Do tell the employer if you are interested in the position. Remember, the job he is discussing with you is important to him and he wants someone who is genuinely interested in the job and his company.

d. Don't discuss the salary until the end of the interview. If the employer

really wants you, the salary can usually be worked out on a mutually satisfactory basis.

Note: In most companies the salary for the position has already been designated. If the salary offered is too low, tell the employer what you have been getting and why you think you are worth more. An employer has little interest in how much you need to cover your expenses , but he is vitally interested in how much you will be worth to him.

15. Do's and Dont's on the job

a. Do always be on time.

b. Don't leave for coffee or other personal matters too frequently.

c. Do give adequate notice in the event of unavoidable tardiness and absence.

d. Do answer the telephone exactly the way your employer wants it answered.

e. Do ask at the end of the day if there is anything pressing that must be done that day.

f. Do ask your employer intermittently how you are doing and ask his suggestions for improvement.

g. Do exert an earnest effort to meet all the requirements of the position.

h. Don't bother your employer with your personal problems.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES QUESTIONNAIRE SUMMARY

Homes visited	125
Citizen migrant farm workers interviewed (heads of families)	50
Legal alien farm workers	7
Illegal alien residents	0
Number of persons affected in interviews (both parents and children)	291
Number of migrant children 16 years and older	58
Number of migrant children under 16	147

Peak season for migration

March	5
April	7
May	32
June	6

Sources of help in obtaining employment before migrating

a.	On their own	18
b.	Through parents' help	2
c.	Relatives	2
d.	Friends	4
e.	Companies - direct contact with them via correspondence	3
f.	Companies contacted through their representatives sent to or residing in San Antonio	11
g.	Trucker (only transportation expenses paid them)	2
h.	Crew leader	4
i.	Texas Employment Commission Annual Worker Plan	4
	Total -	50

Note: 53% migrant farm workers migrated on their own with help of friends, relatives and truckers.

Discrimination reported	0
Have job when they return	8
Do not have job when they return	42
Would like their children to have an education while migrating	50
Enroll children immediately when they return	50

Persons "coached" to send children to school (during off season and while migrating)	5

Educational attainment of adult migrants interviewed

Grade		
No formal education	12	24% no formal education
1st grade	0	
2nd "	0	
3rd "	3	
4th "	6	58% Grammar School Education.
5th "	4	
6th "	5	
7th "	6	
8th "	5	
9th "	5	12 % attended High School but did not graduate
10th "	0	
11th "	1	
*12th "	3	6% High School graduates
Total	50	

*High School graduates

Educational attainment of parents (parents of present generation) of adult migratory farm workers

Grade		
No formal education	30	or 60%
Do not know	3	6%
Grammar School	17	34%
High School	0	--
	50	

Comparison of educational attainment of adults now in migrant stream and that of their parents

	No Formal Education	Grammar School	High School (Undergraduate)	High School (Graduate)	Total
Migratory farm workers of today	24%	58%	12%	6%	100%
Parents of migratory workers of today	66%	34%	0%	0%	100%

Kind of living conditions at home:

Good	11
Fair	24
Poor	15

Plan further education (out of 50 persons interviewed)	2
Skilled workers	2
Semi-skilled workers	4
Unskilled workers	44

Type of employment while not migrating:

Construction (common labor)	21
Factory	1
Services	18
Misc. (carpenter, painter, mechanics helpers, clerk-typists, produce, bakers)	10

Bank Account:

Savings	0
Checking	1

Job areas preferred:

San Antonio (home-base)	16
Texas	3
Anywhere where permanent employment is available	31

Migrants working year-round	5
Migrants employed more than 6 months	16
Reported economic exploitation while migrating	10

Health:

Good	47
Poor	3

Children in family:

No children (not married)	6
1-2	13
2-4	3
4-6	9
6-8	7
8-10	4
10-12	2
12-14	1
14+	0

Times married: (civil and religious)	
One	46
Two	2
Three	1
Four	0
Five	0
Six	1
Property Value:	
None	32
Under $1,000	12
$1,000 - $5,000	11
$5,000 - $10,000	5
$10,000 and above	0
Drinking Habits:	
Never	23
Frequently	27
Home:	
Own or buying home	12
Rent	20
Live with parents	18
Earnings: (Adults - when they work steadily)	
Week	$40 - $ 45
Newspapers Read:	
San Antonio Light	21
San Antonio Express & Evening News	6
La Prensa	1
Do not read newspapers	32
Amount paid for rent or on home:	
$10 to $25	9
$26 to $35	8
$36 to $40	2
$41 to $50	6
Do not own property or rent	25
Age left school:	
No education	12
6 to 8 years of age	0
8 to 10 years of age	0
10 to 15	21
15 to 19	14
High School graduates	3
Like to migrate	4
Migrate out of necessity	46

Days sick last year:
None 47
1 - 5 3

Accidents and Injuries:
Numerous 1
One 1
None 48

Times arrested:
One 5
2-3 0
3-4 1
None 44

Religion:
Regularly 25
Sometime 23
Never 2

HOW INDIVIDUALS, ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS CAN PARTICIPATE

The Individual

The individual person can help by advising his or her employer or personnel director of the BCSS Employment Opportunities Project.

The Employer

Businessman, manufacturer, home-builder, construction contractor, personnel director and others can help by advising the BCSS Employment Referral Service of their personnel needs.

Churches

Every church in communities where migratory workers are home-based in the winter and the nearest churches throughout their migratory itinerary can form councils to undertake such action as deemed necessary and practical in that community in behalf of the migrant farm workers, bearing in mind the objectives of the Bishops' Committee for the Spanish Speaking.

Schools

Schools can give children of migrant farm workers proper guidance concerning the value of an education. Counselling of these children should be the order of the day in all schools prior to the students' annual departure. This counselling should be on a continuous basis until the children's parents are stabilized in a community of their choice. The curricula of all schools affected by migratory workers should provide vocational training in order that the migrants may be placed in a more competitive position for non-farm employment.

Colleges and Universities

It is recommended that colleges and universities encourage their Sociology students, especially the Spanish Speaking, to become well-informed on the socio-economic problems of the migrant farm workers. It is felt that the Sociology classrooms can fill a vital gap in ascertaining the needs of the farm laborers and their children. Introduction of curricula to help the migrant farm worker, as a part of existing courses of study, is highly recommended.

Civic Organizations

Civic organizations can help by familiarizing their membership with the pilot project. In this manner the solution of the problems of these unfortunate migrant farm workers will be expedited.

The following suggestions are made to all civic organizations:

(1) Create a Migrant Labor Committee.

(2) Select from the Committee the members who are the most informed regarding the problems of the migrant farm workers to serve as a Speakers' Bureau for the organization.

(3) Keep in touch and work in liaison with the BCSS Pilot Project.

(4) Encourage the Migrant Labor Committee to attend all conferences, forums, meetings and hearings pertaining to migratory workers.

Newspapers

(1) Newspapers can collaborate with the BCSS project by printing feature stories on migrant farm workers.

(2) Encourage key people to make extensive use of the "Letters to the Editor" column.

Radio and TV Stations

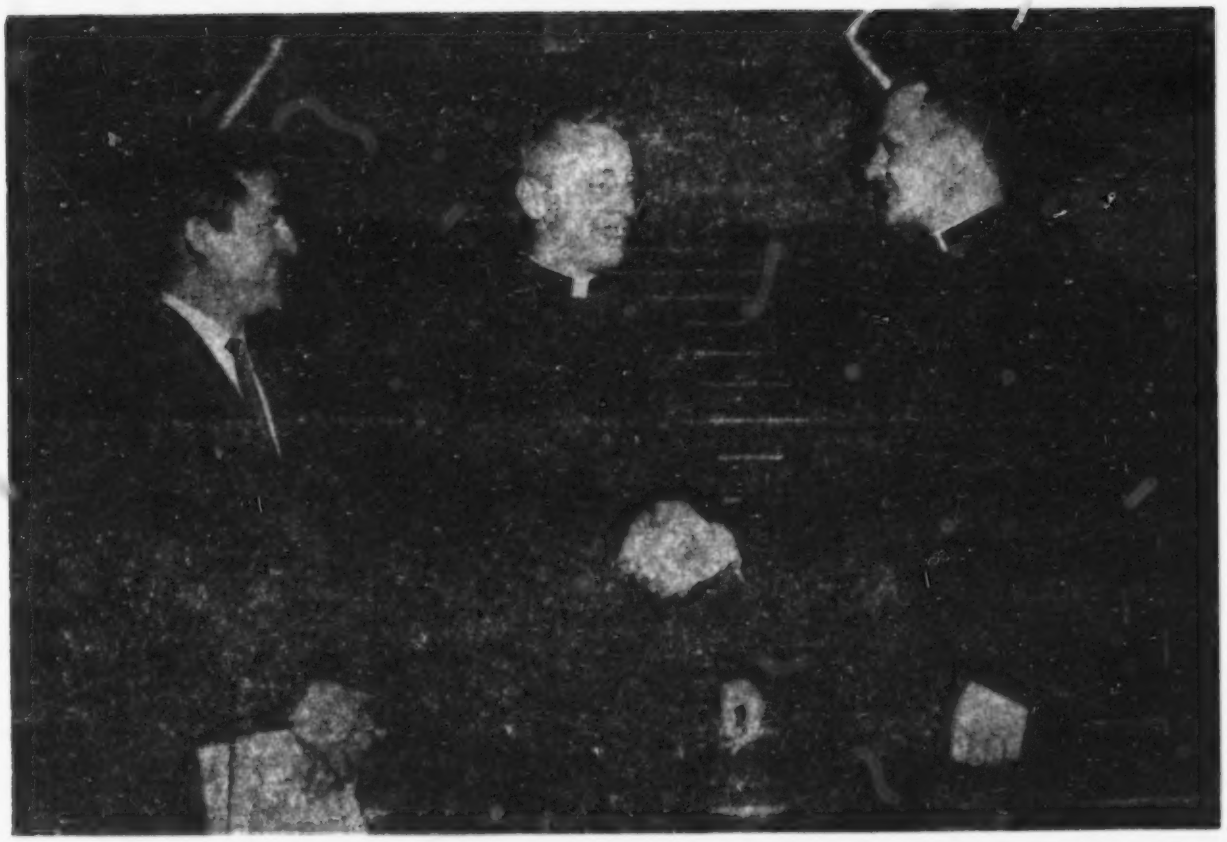
Radio and television stations can develop interviewing and counselling programs and give adequate coverage to the migrant farm worker's problems.

Community as a whole

(1) Acquaint itself with the impact of migrant farm workers in the community.

(2) Develop action that would help the entire community.

(3) Write Legislators requesting favorable legislation in behalf of migrant farm workers and their children.



Rev. Edward W. O'Rourke, Executive Director, National Catholic Rural Life Conference, visits San Antonio to study the local Merrill Employment Opportunities Pilot Project aimed at improving the employment conditions of migrant farm workers of Mexican origin. Standing (L-R) are Luis Alvarado, Project Director, Rev. Edward W. O'Rourke and Rev. John A. Wagner, Executive Secretary of the Bishops' Committee for the Spanish Speaking.

WORKERS REGISTER

The first of several thousand migrant workers interested in working out-of-state register at 127 S. San Augustine St., San Antonio, Texas, sub-office of the Bishops' Committee for the Spanish Speaking.

Luis Alvarado and Father Joseph Gysbers (left to right standing), supervise registration of people interested in working out of state. They are helped in the effort by St. Mary's University students, Jesse Paez, and Joe Garza (seated, center) both Sociology students.

SOCIAL ACTION COUNCIL.

Shown above is the Social Action Council of St. Augusta Parish which has been assisting in obtaining better jobs and opportunities for migrant workers. Sitting (L-R) are Mrs. Sylvester Ortega, Sylvester Ortega, Miss Jane Cervantes, and (standing) Miguel Alfaro, Mrs. Alfaro, and Frank Bergana.

The following is a report submitted by Mr. Edward Tatum to Mr. James Strauss, District Director, Texas Employment Commission, San Antonio, Texas, regarding agricultural placement activity in St. Augusta Parish.

"This is the final report of our activity on agricultural orders in cooperation with the Bishops' Committee.

"We filled 49 out-of-State orders with a total number of 458 workers. We filled 6 Texas orders with a total of 115 workers. As stated in the preliminary report, all of these orders were filled with workers who, for the most part, were not familiar with the Texas Employment Commission, and these orders would have remained unfilled had it not been for Mr. Downey's working with the pilot project of the Bishops' Committee.

"In the past, besides our usual recruitment methods, we had run spot announcements on the Spanish-speaking radio stations in trying to fill orders of the type on which Mr. Downey worked, with very little success. Practically all of the orders filled had crew leaders pre-designated who, for one reason or another, had refused the order. In the past the vast majority of these orders would have gone unfilled.

"In addition to the above, we were also able to fill four orders in our office area with citizen workers. These orders would have resulted in the employment of Mexican national workers.

"Two of the six Texas orders - one in West Texas and one in the Valley - usually resulted in issuing certificates for Mexican nationals. Our efforts prevented this happening this year.

"As you know, this operation was a trial run and after viewing the results I feel that this particular activity certainly benefited all concerned, not only the farmer but also several hundred workers who were apparently in dire need of employment at the time they were exposed to these jobs. It is my honest opinion that these people would have continued to be unemployed had it not been for our participation with the Bishops' Committee.

"As I stated in the preliminary report, we discussed the use of these workers with employers who normally use Mexican nationals during the harvest season and all of the employers stated that they would much rather use the citizen workers than to go to the expense of contracting foreign workers. Certainly from our experience here in working with the Bishops' Committee, it would appear that perhaps we have found at least part of the answer to the Mexican national problem. Perhaps we have found the entire answer to this problem. If this same type of activity could be spread to various parishes throughout Texas, I am convinced that the need of importation of foreign workers would practically be eliminated.

"I am quite enthusiastic over the results and certainly hope that we can continue cooperating and working with the Bishops' Committee in the future."

MERRILL TRUST FUND

Expenses

Travel expense		$ 645.03
(trips made by Father Wagner in connection with the grant)		
Project Director's salary		4250.00
Office expense:		
Employer's SS	$ 127.50	
Office rent	120.00	
Phone	65.00	
Office supplies, printing, etc.	187.50	
		500.00
Received from NCRLC		$5395.03

Voluntary participation:

BCSS

Supervision of project by Rev. John A. Wagner
Secretarial work on project
Office furniture and equipment

Texas Employment Commission

Services of one employee for three months

St. Augusta Church

Use of building for sub-office
Social Action Committee to help with sub-office

St. Mary's University

Sociology students to help in survey